



Town of Townsend

Town Manager's Report

For the March 1st, 2023, Town Council Meeting

February 24, 2023

Dear Mayor and Council,

The followings are items of significance to serve as the basis for discussion at Council meeting and to inform Town Council of the activities of the Town administration. This is not a comprehensive list of activities over the last month and only include details up until 2/24/23. However, it is intended to provide a briefing on activities.

Covid-19 Concerns/Actions

Regarding Covid cases in the 19734-zip code, as of, February 14th, there are no updates to the state website 7-day average of new positive tests is 11.2%. In the Townsend, as of 2/13, the 7-day average of new positive tests is 14.7%.

Regarding vaccinations: Delaware Public Health is reporting in the 19734- zip code, 80.4% of the total population in the 19734 Zip Code is vaccinated with at least 1 dose.

Vaccination information and sites can be found at: www.de.gov/getmyvaccine .

On March 1st, Governor Carney lifted the Covid-19 state of Emergency and signed a narrow Public Health Emergency order, the Public Health Emergency Order was formally extended on 2/3/23.

Office

Town Hall remains open; masks and appointments continue to be highly encouraged. Social distancing remains in effect.

Surface Water Matching Planning Grant.

TE Van-Otoo and his team are continuing to work on this project. As previously discussed and approved, the Town received a second grant for this project in the amount of \$24,900, which assisted in decreasing the Towns match for this project.

DeIDOT

DeIDOT is working on a bicycle/ pedestrian improvement study for the towns of Townsend and Odessa. A public workshop was held on January 4th at 5 pm at Town Hall and a survey regarding bicycle/ pedestrian improvement is available to contribute to on the Town website. We are awaiting DeIDOT's next steps on this project.

Human Resources

The job announcement to hire an additional part time Administrative Assistant has been posted and we are awaiting applications.

Police Department

Town Council approved the purchase and repair of two additional police vehicles and repairs and lettering. We have reviewed the options from the state, are having the vehicles inspected by a mechanic, and will be deciding on which vehicles to purchase and have repaired and lettered. Additional updates are expected by the 3/1/23 TC Meeting.

Public Works

As previously discussed, there is some asphalt settlement at one corner of the inlet casting near 1035 W. Founds which has come to our attention. The Town Inspector has reviewed the area and determined that the settlement is small and there is no indication of deterioration. The settlement should be addressed eventually but is not currently an area of concern. We are continuing to monitor this area and will update accordingly.

The following stop signs have been replaced:

- Edgar Rd. and Caldwell Corner Rd.
- Andy St. and Wiggins Mill Rd.
- Ginn St. and Karins Blvd.
- South St. and Collins Ct.

We have also replaced the missing 25 mph and children at play sign along Wiggins Mill frontage Rd and the following street signs have been replaced after being knocked over:

- Marilyn Ct.
- Edgar Rd.

We have received the formal report with suggestions from the Deputy Fire Chief regarding areas of concern for fire trucks to get through and areas that may need to eliminate parking. It is currently being reviewed. We have begun working on the yellow painting of the curbs along Wiggins Mill Frontage Rd. the following efforts will be made on Wiggins Mill Frontage Rd.:

- On the northern entrance to Wiggins Mill frontage, the outer radius has been painted, to prohibit parking along the frontage of the homes and on the inner radius from the stop sign to 30 feet west, behind the stop sign.
- On the southern entrance to Wiggins Mill frontage, we will be painting the inner radius has been painted, to prohibit parking along the opposite side of the houses and on the outer radius from the stop sign, 30 feet west, behind the stop sign.
- Letters have been sent to property owners on this street to advise them of the change to parking in the area.

Public Works has continued to paint the curbs near fire hydrants.

Concerns regarding speed limit and other sign placements are being reviewed by the Town Code Inspector, Town Engineer, and myself and reviewed against documented plans and may be moved once deemed necessary and appropriate.

Public Works Building/ Pole Barn

At a previous Town Council meeting, Council approved utilizing ARPA funds for Professional Engineering Design Services for Townsend Pole Barn Building in the amount of \$53,900. The original intent was to utilize the consolidated parcels at 661 South Street to build a pole building for the Town Public Works department. A site plan had been drafted as part of this approval and the addition of the Pole Barn building would lead to a tight fit with the current Police Department and would leave little room to expand the Police Department in the future at that site.

As discussed at the February 2023, Town Council meeting, Town Council has allowed until June 2023 to review the additional Town owned parcel at Finley Street and to review prospective additional parcels throughout Town. I am currently in the process of reviewing and awaiting information from property owners and will follow up with a recommendation on locations as soon as possible.

We have moved forward with our Town Engineer and his team to perform the wetlands delineation at the Finley Street Town parcel and are expecting to have the work completed and receive the wetlands delineation report over the next couple of weeks. The hope is that this information will shed light on how the Town can proceed with building on the Finley Street site. As the report is issued, I will share with Town Council.

Solar Speed Limit Signs

As previously approved, the Town has received the CTF agreement to proceed with the solar speed limit signs. The Town has ordered eight signs from Radarsign to be funded by the CTF grant from Representative Spiegelman. The agreement has been approved for signs in the following locations:

- i. Northbound on Brook Ramble Lane in the Townsend Station Development
- ii. Northbound on Edgar Rd. in the Townsend Village Development
- iii. Southbound on South St. in the Townsend Village II Development
- iv. Northbound on South St. in the Townsend Village II Development
- v. Westbound on Main Street- near the Fire Department traveling into the heart of Town- Townsend Elementary School is right near this location and the Town has a priority for walkability and their placement would encourage safe travels to school, in accordance with the Town Comp Plan and WILMAPCO Walkability Study.
- vi. East Bound on Main Street- near the Kaitlyn entrance to TVI traveling into the heart of Town.
- vii. Southbound on Wiggins Mill Rd- traveling towards the heart of Town.
- viii. Northbound on Commerce St- traveling into the heart of Town.

The signs will take a few weeks to come in and once they come in and the weather is holding up, they will be installed. Some items have been received and we have received confirmation that additional items are on the way. Please note that the vendor has advised that the poles are expected to arrive in a few weeks but that they are currently on back order so it may be a little delayed.

Public Safety

The Public Safety Committee met in February to review the report submitted to the Town by Deputy Fire Chief Gilchrist regarding concerns of parking on Town streets relating to the ability for fire trucks to fit down streets. Concerns were reviewed at the meeting and prioritized. The Committee decided to have the Town send letters to the residents of the streets with prioritized concerns and we are working on finalizing those letters. The letters will be reviewed by the Public Safety Committee before going out.

Website

The Town website has been updated with functionality to add an event to your calendar. Simply select the event of interest and choose to add to your calendar of choice. Additionally, a function has been added to allow those interested to subscribe to meetings and receive weekly newsletters for meetings and events. Website updates are in progress on the back end of the website.

Annexation/Development

I continue to work on the annexation of properties into Town. I have been notified that New Castle County voted to proceed with the authorization of annexation of Parcel # 14-016.00-047, 6170 Summit Bridge Road. We will continue to prepare this annexation for PLUS and a Town Council vote.

I continue to be contacted by those interested in annexing into Town. Both residential and commercial interest has been expressed and I have received multiple points of contact this month alone.

Additionally, as discussed at the last few Town Council Meetings, The Planning Commission has made recommendations for parcels to add to the Future Land Use & Growth & Annexation Areas Map, have determined the future land use type recommendations for these parcels at their February 9th, 2023, meeting. They are finalizing the map and are going to submit to PLUS for the amendment.

American Rescue Plan

Regarding the American Rescue Plan, we have already authorized the expense of engineering for the Pole Barn, Bonuses, and for the following items for the Townsend Police Department- new vehicles, inspections, and the lettering of the vehicles; contingent on the vehicle inspections; new Police radios, and mobile police vehicle recording systems. We will continue to discuss ARPA at the coming meetings.

Here is the current ARPA breakdown:

Total ARPA Awarded= \$790,706.26

Townsend General-

- Barnes & Thornburg Legal Services for ARPA= \$3,082.76
- Bonuses= \$13,000.00
- OPRT Irrigation Project Match= \$37,600.00
- Total General= \$53,682.76

Townsend Public Works

- Professional Engineering Design Services for Townsend Pole Barn Building- \$53,900
- Total PW= \$53,900.00

Townsend Police Department-

- New vehicles, inspections and the lettering of the vehicles; contingent on the vehicle inspections- Not to exceed \$27,000.00.
- New Police radios- \$23,365.84
- Mobile police vehicle recording systems- \$34,560.00.
- Bonuses= \$1,500.00
- TOTAL PD= \$86,425.84

Overall Total Obligated= \$194,008.60

Total Remainder= \$596,697.66

******* Please remember that some funds will be utilized for the pole barn and that cost currently remains unknown.**

Town Events

The SAT Practice Exam was a great event! We were able to partner with Sylvan Learning Center to provide 11 students with the opportunity to take a practice SAT Exam.

The Town Fair and Parade are being planned for June 3rd, 2023. Please visit the Town website vendor and parade participant forms. Please encourage those you know to march in our parade and become a fair vendor.

Grants

As previously mentioned, we have been working on numerous grant applications and we are currently awaiting notifications of award or denial. The grants include:

1. DE Nature Society & Delmarva Power Sustainable Communities Grant- to address resiliency related to solar installation. We have graciously received this grant in the amount of **\$3,975** to assist with the solar panel repair at Town Hall.
2. A second DNREC Surface Water Matching Planning Grant Application has been received in the amount of **\$24,900** for additional grant funding to the Townsend Stormwater Management Study. This application will provide additional grant funding to hopefully lower the Town grant match amount. This has been approved and granted.
3. DNREC ORPT grant match in the amount of **\$37,600** for an irrigation system for the Town Municipal Park's Multipurpose and Baseball fields has been awarded to the Town. Town Council has committed to matching this with ARPA funds.
4. The DeIDOT TAP Grant application has been submitted to address sidewalks throughout the Town, a land acquisition for the Town Park to allow for an extension of the park trail, and upgrades to the Town's drainage system. I have received correspondence that DeIDOT was pleased with our application and is willing to work with us on efforts on Main Street requiring a match up to \$60,000. At the Town Council meeting on 12/7/22 Council agreed to match up to \$60,000.

We have met with DeIDOT officials in the beginning of February to talk through project priorities and their ability to fund the Town project. We have asked them to consider adding the review of sidewalk improvements to South Street to the project. We have officially received notice of what the project will focus on and the project will cover the following:

"The TAP project intends to focus on improving pedestrian accessibility and connections on and around Main Street as indicated in your application. Pending your sponsor participation, the TAP award for this project will continue into PE design and construction phases with selected or prioritized items based on available funding. We will also investigate South Street as far as streetscape improvement options."

We continue to await the total amount of funds to be received from DeIDOT and the final matching requirements with the addition of South Street to the continuation of the project. I have also been in contact with Representative Spiegelman and Senator Hoffner to request funding support for the match to this project. Upon confirmation of the DeIDOT amount and match amount, I will confirm funding availability with our legislators.

Administrative Matters * As of 2/24/23**

February Licenses Issued: Contractors Licenses Issued: 10
Business Licenses Issued: 7
Rental Licenses Issued: 2

January Permits: 7 permits issued.
3 permits closed and issued a final approval letter.
1 permit closed and issued a Certificate of Occupancy
9 Inspections Completed

January Violations Issued: 4 violation notices issued.

Taxes and Outstanding Debts to the Town

The Town has continued to make attempts to collect outstanding debt to the Town and has sent notifications to residents with outstanding tax, utility, violation, and other debts to the Town. Furthermore, for those with long term outstanding debt, the Town had worked with the Town Solicitor to extend existing liens and place additional liens on those with debt. There are 14 liens in total and those who have liens will be notified.

Letter Received by the Town- Regarding an Application for Tavern License

The Town Has received a letter that Shellfish Enterprises LLC, Shellfish Brewing Series 2, trading as Shellfish Brewing Company has on February 13, 2023, applied with the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner for a Tavern license for a premise located at 316 Gray Street Unit #2 Townsend, Delaware 19734. Anyone with concerns against this application should provide written notice of their objections to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner. The Commissioner must receive one or more documents containing a total of at least 10 signatures of residents or property owners located within 1 mile of the premises or in any incorporated areas located within 1 mile of the premises. The signatures of residents or property owners must also include the mailing address for the property and the email address (if one exists) for the resident or property owner. The protest(s) must be filed with the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner at the 3rd Floor, Carvel State Office Building, 820 North French Street, Wilmington, DE 19801. The protest(s) must be received by the Commissioner's office on or before March 16, 2023.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the details of this report or other Town matters, please contact me directly at Town Hall 302-378-8082 or via email at atantillo@townsend.delaware.gov.

Sincerely,

Antonina Tantillo

Antonina Tantillo, MPA
Town Manager, Town of Townsend